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LARSON, CT & MA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION HOST HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ON RAIL ISSUES TO DISCUSS HIGH SPEED RAIL IN NORTHEAST

Hartford, CT- Continuing their commitment to have high speed rail in Connecticut and New England become a reality, U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, and members of the Connecticut and Massachusetts congressional delegations hosted a series of meetings today to discuss the issue with the chief House lawmaker in charge of national rail issues. Republican Congressman Bill Shuster of Pennsylvania, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, visited Hartford to learn more about the ongoing efforts to have high speed rail service in Connecticut and throughout the Northeast region. The meetings included Connecticut Governor Dannel P. Malloy, as well as listening to presentations from Amtrak and state transportation officials from across New England.

Yesterday, Congressman Shuster participated in a House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure field hearing at Grand Central Terminal in New York City on developing true high-speed passenger rail service in the Northeast.

“I am pleased to welcome Congressman Shuster to Connecticut to learn more about our goal to make this region a high-speed rail corridor. I firmly believe there is an important need for a targeted focus on high speed rail in the Northeast and New England corridors. We have made great strides in our goal of making the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield rail line a reality, with critical investments from both the federal and state levels. Even with those investments, there is more progress to be made,” said Congressman Larson, who serves as Co-Chair of the House Northeast Rail Caucus. “

President Obama echoed the importance of high speed rail in his State of the Union address, with a focus on decreasing travel time and congestion on our roads, and enhancing overall economic growth in our communities. This is an issue important to Democrats and Republicans alike, and it will take continual coordination and partnerships on local, state and federal levels by all to move this initiative forward. I am confident after today’s meetings that we will accomplish our goal. ”

“As Chairman of the Railroads Subcommittee, I believe development in American high speed rail isn’t a Republican or Democratic issue; it’s a matter of securing America’s future prosperity,” said Congressman Bill Shuster (R-PA-09). ***“High speed rail is essential to our nation’s transportation future and our best hope for easing the pressure on our congested highways and airspace. The Northeast Corridor must be the focus our efforts, but we must also invest in connecting routes like the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield line, which are critical to growing ridership and increasing connectivity to our passenger rail system.”***

Congressman Shuster added, ***“I am pleased to have been able to join with my friend and colleague Congressman John Larson and members of the Connecticut and Massachusetts delegation today to discuss the promising future of high speed rail in Connecticut with Governor Malloy. I look forward to working with John as a leader in passenger rail in the House of Representatives.”***

“The Northeast Corridor represents the best opportunity for true high-speed rail in our country, and the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield line is a critical component of that corridor. Building this line will help to create jobs, dramatically reduce traffic, and

expand opportunities for economic development,” said Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (CT-03). ***“I believe these and other investments in critical infrastructure projects, including by leveraging private investment, will create good middle class jobs and restore our long-term prosperity.”***

“Improving our local railways and transportation hubs is an important targeted investment and an engine of growth for our local economy,” said Congressman Joe Courtney (CT-02). ***“Especially in the crowded northeast corridor, reducing congestion and improving the long-term stability of our infrastructure are critical for business and commerce. These meetings and Congressman Shuster’s visit are important steps as we continue to work toward those goals.”***

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Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-05) said, ***“As long as people in Connecticut have no choice but to stay stuck in their cars, our economy and quality of life will continue to suffer. We’ve taken the first important steps toward an expanded and modernized rail network, but we need committed partners at both the state and federal level to make that vision a reality.”***

“The Northeast is one of the most densely populated areas of the country and building a modern rail network is key to minimizing congestion and maintaining economic competitiveness,” Massachusetts Congressman John Olver, Co-Chair of the Northeast Rail Caucus, said. ***“Today’s meeting demonstrates our strong regional commitment to working together to support the expansion of passenger and freight opportunities.”***

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